
Powers, Functions, and Duties
of the
Public Buildings Administration
Federal Works Agency

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POWERS, FUNCTIONS, AND DUTIES OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY

This statement of powers, functions, and duties of the Public Buildings Administration was included in testimony by Commissioner W. E. Reynolds before the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments in connection with the investigation of the RFC's space procurement policies,

JUNE 3 and 4, 1947.

ORIGIN OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION

The Public Buildings Administration was created under section 303 of Reorganization Plan No. 1 promulgated by the President under the Reorganization Act of 1939. By a joint resolution of Congress, plan 1 became effective on July 1, 1939. Pertinent portions of section 303 of plan 1 are quoted below:

"SEC. 303. Public Buildings Administration—(a) The Public Buildings Branch of the Procurement Division and its functions, the Branch of Buildings Management of the National Park Service and its functions (except those relating to monuments and memorials) and the functions of the National Park Service in the District of Columbia in connection with the general assignment of space, the selection of sites for public buildings, and the determination of the priority in which the construction or enlargement of public buildings shall be undertaken, are hereby consolidated and shall be administered as the Public Buildings Administration, with a Commissioner of Public Buildings at the head thereof. * * * The Commissioner of Public Buildings shall act under the direction and supervision of the Federal Works Administrator.

"(b) All functions of the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of Procurement relating to the administration of the Public Buildings Branch of the Procurement Division, and all functions of the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the National Park Service relating to the administration of the functions of the Branch of Buildings Management and the functions of the National Park Service in the District of Columbia in connection with the general assignment of space, the selection of sites for public buildings, and the determination of the priority in which the construction or enlargement of public buildings shall be undertaken, are hereby transferred to, and shall be exercised by, the Federal Works Administrator."

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT IN TREASURY DEPARTMENT

A unit of the organization which was constituted the Public Buildings Administration in 1939, had its inception in July 1836. During July of that year, the President, Andrew Jackson, stood with an architect, Robert Mills, in the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. The President thrust his cane into the ground and said, "The New Treasury Building will be built here." On July

4, 1836, the Congress appropriated the funds for the construction of that building, and on the succeeding July 6 the President appointed Mills to be Federal Architect, which position he filled until 1842, at which time the office space which he occupied was required for other purposes.

Possibly the fact that the collection of customs was a function of the Treasury Department, and the construction of customhouses for the housing of field activities incidental thereto was a necessary collateral operation, in addition to the fact that disbursement of public money was concerned, accounts for the allocation of architectural and building activities to that Department. Whatever the reason, during the earlier years, the Secretary of the Treasury arranged in many instances for the construction of buildings under the supervision of local commissions. Local architects and supervisors of construction were often employed and paid out of funds appropriated for the construction of designated buildings.

By 1853 the building activities of the Government had reached such proportions that the system of accounting in the Treasury and in the field had become inadequate. During the period since 1842 an able architect, Ammi B. Young, who had been associated with Mills during his tenure of office as Federal Architect, had continued in the service of the Treasury Department, though without title and without direct appropriation for his salary and expenses. By 1853, the United States owned 23 customhouses and 18 marine hospitals and there were 15 customhouses in course of construction. In order to meet the situation in the spring of 1853, the Secretary of the Treasury, James B. Guthrie, created the Construction Branch of the Treasury Department and issued general regulations applicable to the work of that branch. The order and the regulations, which appear in the Secretary's financial report for 1852-53, constitute the earliest record of a formal organization in the Treasury Department, the functions of which were directed exclusively to the Government's building activities. There is no known specific statutory authorization for the Secretary's action in forming this branch of the Department. It is probable that he resorted to general authority vested in him which empowered him to take whatever steps were necessary to give effect to the provisions of laws which he was directed to administer.

The first head of the newly created Construction Branch was Capt. Alexander H. Bowman, United States of America, who, upon request of the Secretary of the Treasury for the services of an engineer officer, was detailed by the Secretary of War and assigned in Treasury to be engineer in charge of the Bureau of Construction. Captain Bowman retained Young, who had been in continuous service since the departure of Robert Mills, in the new organization of his architectural aid, with the title of supervising architect. Upon assuming his new duties, Captain Bowman promulgated regulations for the guidance of employees both in Washington and in the field and devised forms for abstracts, vouchers, reports, and related purposes necessary to the initiation of specific procedure adaptable to the specialized needs of construction operations.

The first congressional recognition of the Construction Branch of the Treasury appears in the Deficiency Act of March 14, 1864. In that act provision was made for one superintending architect, one assistant architect, and several clerks "in the Construction Branch of the Treasury." In subsequent acts, this branch of the Treasury has been recognized under one name or another.

The first reference in legislation to a supervising architect appears in the Sundry Civil Act of March 2, 1871, wherein certain appropriations were made under the title "Government Buildings under the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department." Later, in 1875, the Sundry Civil Act provided for a supervising architect in the Construction Branch of the Treasury and also for numerous clerks and messengers. Since that year, provisions have been made in legislative enactments for continuation of those employees, with such modifications and additions as have been appropriate. Within the next 2 or 3 years, there was adopted an organization for the Treasury Department which provides, among other things, that "There shall be in the Department of the Treasury * * * one supervising architect."

There are no statutes which specifically defined the duties of the supervising architect or his office. In general, the Secretary of the Treasury was "authorized and directed" to administer the provisions of the various public buildings acts which were applicable to specifically designated projects. In the administration of construction operations, the Secretary of the Treasury and the supervising architect were subjected to measures of control which were invoked from time to time through scattered provisions of law.

With the passing of time and expansion of Government building activities the size of the supervising architect's office increased, as did also the number of buildings and magnitude of operations handled by it. In 1933, the expanded activities and increased importance of operations of the office were reflected in an Executive order which provided means of meeting the demands of the business transacted by the office.

Executive Order No. 6166, dated June 10, 1933, issued in pursuance of authorization by the act of March 3, 1933 (Public, No. 428, 47 Stat. 1517), as amended by the act of March 20, 1933 (48 Stat. 16), constituted in the Treasury Department a Procurement Division, at the head of which was a Director of Procurement who was responsible and reported directly to the Secretary of the Treasury. The order designated the effective date of the order to be 61 days after June 10, 1933, but provided that the President, in the interest of economy, might require that any transfer, consolidation, or elimination might be delayed in his discretion to some later date. Accordingly, on July 27, 1933, the President issued Executive Order No. 6224, which delayed the effective date of those portions of the prior order which related to the Procurement Division under an ultimate of December 31, 1933, but provided that an effective order might be made by the Secretary of the Treasury, with the approval of the President, between August 10, 1933, and December 31, 1933. Accordingly, on October 9, 1933, the President approved an order of the Secretary of the Treasury, William H. Woodin, which established the Procurement Division in his Department.

Executive Order No. 6166 vested in the Director of Procurement the authority to determine policies and methods pertaining to property, facilities, and structures, exercised by any Federal agency, with the specific exception that work performed by the Corps of Engineers of the Army remains with that corps, subject to the responsibilities vested in the Procurement Division. In effect, the Executive order vested in the Procurement Division the control of all policies and methods of construction by the Federal Government, with the one exception noted, such control to be exercised under any or all of the four conditions specified in the order, namely, that it may undertake the performance itself; may permit the agency for which the structure or facility is to be erected to perform the work; may entrust such performance to some other agency; or may avail itself in part of any of these recourses as it may deem desirable in the interest of economy and efficiency. The pursuance of any of the courses above outlined, except the first that is, the performance of the construction work by the Procurement Division itself, to be subject to the prior approval of the President.

A provision of Executive Order No. 6166 divorced from the Treasury Department and placed with the Post Office Department the administration of post office buildings. By virtue of this provision, the Public Buildings Branch, after constructing the respective post office buildings, retained responsibility for their repair, preservation, betterment, and extension, but had no responsibility for their operation, heating, or protection.

The provisions of Executive Order No. 6166, as they relate to the construction of Federal buildings, have been the subject of interpretation by the Comptroller General, who has said, "The evident purpose of the order of June 10, 1933, was to centralize with a view to economy, through avoidance of force duplication, etc., the work of procurement, including structures, and the matter being clearly within the authority granted the President by the act of March 20, 1933, the order has, of course, the force and effect of law and is for observance accordingly" (Comp. Gen., Aug. 30, 1934, A52302.)

Legislative recognition of the above-quoted pronouncement by the Comptroller General is contained in the act of Congress approved June 15, 1938 (52 Stat. 638) which contains the following language:

"Sec. 35. The Secretary of the Treasury may, in his discretion, upon the request of the head of any other executive department, independent establishment, or other Federal agency, cause the Procurement Division, Treasury Department, to carry out the construction of any building or buildings for governmental purposes which any such executive department, establishment, or agency may be authorized to have constructed, including the preparation of plans, drawings, designs, specifications, and estimates, the acquisition of land necessary for sites, the execution of contracts, and supervision of construction: *Provided*, That funds appropriated to other executive departments, independent establishments, or other Federal agencies for the foregoing purposes shall be available for transfer to and expenditure by the Procurement Division, Treasury Department, in whole or in part, either in reimbursement of the proper appropriations of the Procurement Division, for the cost of such work, or as advances to special accounts for the purpose of providing for the prosecution of said work."

The Director of Procurement effected a functional type of organization and established in his Division a Public Works Branch (subsequently the Public Buildings Branch) and a Branch of Supply. To the former were allocated all activities formerly performed by the Office of the Supervising Architect and remaining with the Treasury Department after the date of the Secretary's order; to the latter were allocated all activities of procurement of materials, supplies, and equipment.

By the time that the Procurement Division was formed, the building activities of the Government were of such magnitude that a change of nomenclature was necessary in order to establish consistency between official titles and spheres of activity. Accordingly, the Public Buildings Branch was placed under the immediate direction of the Assistant Director of Procurement, Public Buildings Branch. The venerated and highly regarded title of supervising architect was retained and allocated to the official next subordinate to the Assistant Director and assigned principally professional duties in connection with the preparation of designs, plans, and specifications for building projects. A second principal office, coordinate with that of the Supervising Architect, was created under the direction of the supervising engineer whose duties embraced the field supervision of construction operations and the repair and preservation of completed structures.

Prior to May 25, 1926, public-building programs were authorized from time to time under omnibus bills passed by Congress. On that date, however, there was enacted the Public Building Act, which provided a broad and basic law for the orderly development and authorization of public-building programs for the Federal establishment in Washington and for the country at large. Provision was made for the presentation to Congress, through the Bureau of the Budget, of estimates of the Government's building needs, and in cooperation with the Postmaster General, for the housing requirements of the postal service. The act, as amended from time to time, authorized a total limit of cost for the whole program to be spent at a specified rate per year and to be equitably spread over the country. This program was well under way at the time that the Executive order creating the Procurement Division was issued. Since June 10, 1933, however, outside of the necessary moneys required to complete projects under way under the regular program, no authorizations have been given for new work under this act of May 25, 1926. On the other hand, Congress entrusted to the Procurement Division several emergency construction programs which had been partially fulfilled and were in process at the time when the Public Buildings Branch was transferred to the Federal Works Agency.

Subsequent to the creation of the Procurement Division on June 19, 1933, Congress enacted the following laws, each of which either placed additional functions in the Public Buildings Branch or enabled it to perform more thoroughly the functions delegated by Executive Order No. 6166:

Public, No. 351, August 27, 1935: To provide for disposition, control, and use of surplus real property acquired by Federal agencies, etc.

Public, No. 330, August 26, 1935: To authorize the sale of Federal buildings.

Public Act No. 351 authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to assume control of surplus real property which has been declared to be in excess of the needs of any Federal agency having control thereof for reassignment to other Federal agencies or for sale or lease, and also permitted the Director of Procurement to make repairs and alterations on such properties and to maintain and operate them for the benefit of Federal agencies, and where occupied by several agencies to make a pro rata charge to them as rent for such occupancy. The act also authorized the Director of Procurement to procure space by lease for the housing of any Federal agency or agencies outside the District of Columbia, except the Post Office Department, for periods not exceeding 5 years, and to assign and reassign space therein.

Under Public Act No. 330, the Secretary was authorized to dispose of Federal buildings under his control, for which there is no further Federal need, to States, counties, municipalities, or other duly constituted political subdivisions of States for public use, the purchase price in such cases to be not less than 50 percent of the appraised value. The act also permits the dedication of portions of Federal building sites to municipalities for use in connection with duly authorized, comprehensive street-widening programs.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT IN INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

The Office of Buildings Management, Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency, which maintains and operates public buildings, originated pursuant to the act of Congress approved July 16, 1790 (1 Stat. 130), whereby

the President of the United States was authorized to appoint three Commissioners to define and limit a district or territory on the Potomac River for establishing a permanent seat of government for the United States and to provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress, and of the President, and for the public offices of the Government of the United States.

In accordance with the provisions of the act approved May 1, 1802 (2 Stat. 175), the offices of the Commissioners appointed by virtue of the aforesaid act of July 16, 1790, were abolished and the affairs of the city of Washington were placed under the direction of a Superintendent appointed by, and under the control of, the President of the United States. This superintendent was vested with all powers and duties of the former Commissioners and authorized to perform further duties which might be required of him by virtue of any act of Congress or any act of the General Assembly of Maryland, or in any other manner whatsoever.

The act of April 29, 1816 (3 Stat. 324, 325), abolished the office of Superintendent, established pursuant to the aforesaid act of May 1, 1802, and provided that the President should appoint one Commissioner who should, after the 3d day of March 1817, be vested with all powers and duties as were conferred upon the aforesaid Superintendent.

In 1849 a congressional act created a Department of Interior and provided, among other things, "That the supervisory and appellate powers now exercised by the President of the United States over the Commissioner of Public Buildings shall be exercised by the Secretary of the Interior."

In 1867 Congress provided that the Office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings be abolished and that the Chief Engineer of the Army perform all duties required by law of the said Commissioner and that the Chief Engineer also have the superintendence over the Washington aqueduct and all the public works and improvements of the Government of the United States in the District of Columbia unless otherwise provided by law. These functions remained under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Engineers for 58 years, when by the act approved February 26, 1925, they were transferred to the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital who was to perform the said duties under the direction of the President of the United States.

The Commission in charge of the State, War, and Navy Department Buildings was established by the act approved March 3, 1883. This Commission was abolished by the act of February 26, 1925, and the duties vested in the Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital.

The Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital and the Public Buildings Commission were abolished by Executive Order No. 6166 June 10, 1933, and their functions were transferred to the Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations of the Interior Department. The name of this bureau was changed by the act of March 2, 1934, to the National Park Service and the functions of the former Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, with the exception of the National Capital Parks, were continued in the National Park Service as the Branch of Buildings Management.

Prior to the issuance of Executive Order No. 6166 dated June 10, 1933, there were under the jurisdiction of the former Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital all buildings in the District of Columbia maintained by the Branch of Buildings Management subsequent to that order, with the exception of buildings constructed or rented since that date which were placed under the Branch of Buildings Management for maintenance and operation and buildings housing the executive offices of the Department of Agriculture and the Veterans' Administration, which were transferred to the Branch of Buildings Management as the result of said Executive order. Also prior to the issuance of that Executive order the absolute control and allotment of all space in the District of Columbia, with certain exceptions, were vested in the Public Buildings Commission, and as a result of the order were placed in the Space Control Division of the Branch of Buildings Management.

LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE CREATION OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION

At the time of the creation of the Public Buildings Administration on July 1, 1939, the emergency programs relating to Federal public buildings were nearing completion and the country was on the verge of an all-out national defense program. This coupled with the subsequent state of war and the uncertainties of the

period of reconversion from war to peace accounts for the fact that very little legislation has been enacted recently by the Congress pertaining to the Public Buildings Administration.

The only recent legislation which has much bearing on this discussion is Public Law 413, Seventy-ninth Congress, approved June 14, 1946. Section 1 (a) of that act authorized the Federal Works Administrator to construct extensions to the marine hospitals at Seattle, Wash., and San Francisco, Calif., and to purchase buildings either unencumbered or subject to existing leases where in his determination it is advantageous to do so to remodel the same; to establish the limits of cost and design new building projects where the sites are in Government ownership. The section established a total limit of cost for the foregoing of \$13,000,000 and also authorized the acquisition of certain land in the District of Columbia under a limit of cost of \$2,000,000 and for these purposes made available certain unobligated balances of previous appropriations.

By section 4 of the act, section 3 of the act of August 27, 1935 (Public Law No. 351), referred to above, was amended so as to grant to the Commissioner of Public Buildings greater authority with respect to the leasing of space outside the District of Columbia for the housing of any Federal agencies except the Post Office Department.

Section 5 of the act authorizes the Commissioner of Public Buildings to maintain a survey of the use of Government-owned and leased office space in the larger metropolitan centers and the District of Columbia including adjacent areas and to study and determine the extent to which consolidation, reassignment, and reallocation of office space, including the cancellation of uneconomical leases would be advantageous to the Government. Under the provisions of this section when the Commissioner finds uneconomical use of space in buildings operated or leased by the Public Buildings Administration, he is required to direct its economical use or surrender and in the event that such conditions are found to exist in space not under the control of the Public Buildings Administration, the Commissioner is required to report his findings to those who are responsible therefor. This section does not apply to Government corporations, the Executive Mansion and Office of the President, buildings under the jurisdiction of the regents of the Smithsonian Institution, buildings in or under the legislative branch of the Government, buildings structurally or domestically maintained by the Architect of the Capitol, or to buildings operated by the Post Office Department.

By section 6 of the act, the Commissioner of Public Buildings is authorized to lease for a period not exceeding 5 years, storage accommodations within the District of Columbia for the use of the several activities of the Government. The same authority is extended to the head of any department or establishment of the Government to which an appropriation is made specifically for the rental of storage accommodations within the District of Columbia.

Section 6 of the act authorizes the Commissioner of Public Buildings to provide and operate public utility communication services serving one or more Government activities, in and outside the District of Columbia, where it is found that such services are economical and in the interest of the Government. This authority does not apply to the handling of messages of a confidential or secret nature or to buildings occupied or operated by the Post Office Department, except upon request of the department or agency concerned.

This act is interim in nature and is designed to strengthen the authority of the Public Buildings Administration with respect to procurement and utilization of Government-controlled space and to permit that Administration to utilize to best advantage a limited amount of funds already appropriated. The additional authority dealing with the utilization of space was vitally necessary in view of the large amount of temporary space acquired by many agencies during the national defense and war years and the problems of its disposition or its continued use under advantageous leases.

PRESENT ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION

Public Buildings Administration is at present divided into five operational units, consisting of the Offices of Design and Construction, Real Estate Management, Buildings Management, and Administration, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner, and the Office of Solicitor. The head of each operational unit reports directly to the Commissioner. The functions and activities of the three operational units involved in this report are hereinafter described.

OFFICE OF REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Basic authority for the control, by the Public Buildings Administration, of Government-owned buildings located outside of the District of Columbia, other than post-office buildings which were divorced from the Treasury Department by Executive Order 6166 previously mentioned, is contained in 40 U. S. C. A., section 285, which reads as follows:

"All courthouses, customhouses, appraiser's stores, barge offices, and other public buildings outside of the District of Columbia and outside of military reservations which have been purchased or erected, or are in course of construction, or which may be erected or purchased out of any appropriation under the control of the Federal Works Agency, together with the site or sites thereof, are expressly declared to be under the exclusive jurisdiction and control and in the custody of the Federal Works Administrator, who shall have full power to take possession of and assign and reassign rooms therein to such Federal officials, clerks, and employees as in his judgment and discretion should be furnished with offices or rooms therein."

The authority for the control, by the Public Buildings Administration, of Government-owned leased space within the District of Columbia is contained in 40 U. S. C. A., section 1, quoted below:

"The Public Buildings Administration in the Federal Works Agency shall have the absolute control of and the allotment of all space in the several public buildings owned or buildings leased by the United States in the District of Columbia, with the exception of the Executive Mansion, and office of the President, Capitol Building, the Senate and House Office Buildings, the Capitol Power Plant, the buildings under the jurisdiction of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and the Congressional Library Building, and shall from time to time assign and allot, for the use of the several activities of the Government, all such space."

Certain buildings in the District of Columbia, such as the Treasury, Bureau of Engraving, Government Printing Office, District of Columbia courts, and other buildings outside the District of Columbia, are not under the control of the Public Buildings Administration due to the provisions of Executive Order 6166 which exempted buildings chiefly employed as a facility in the work of a particular agency.

In general this Office is responsible for the determination of Federal building requirements throughout the country; for the control of rented space either by direct lease or by recommending to other departments or agencies of the Government the economical use thereof; the assignment of space in Government owned or leased properties under the control of the Public Buildings Administration and for the control and disposition of surplus real property declared to it by other Federal agencies as in excess of their needs.

The Project-Development Unit of this Office is charged with the determination of the Federal building needs throughout the country. This determination is based upon ascertained needs of the Post Office Department and other Federal agencies through conferences with representatives of the Post Office Department and officials of other agencies; upon analysis of the records of this Administration, which compiles statistics on all space occupied by the Federal Government in both rented and leased buildings, and by field investigations by our representatives.

Pursuant thereto, periodic reports to Congress are submitted by the Federal Works Administrator and the Postmaster General which establish by location, purpose, character of project, and limit of cost, all eligible public building projects outside the District of Columbia. Congress then appropriates lump-sum amounts in its discretion, to carry out the building program, or a portion thereof, recommended in the report. Legislation authorizing the lump-sum appropriations for Federal building construction outside the District of Columbia requires that the Federal Works Administrator and the Postmaster General select the specific projects on the basis of their relative urgency, and with consideration to their equitable distribution throughout the country. The factors of relative urgency include the rate of growth in population and postal receipts, the character and relative inadequacy of existing facilities and the amount of rent paid by the Government in the specific localities.

Subsequent to the selection of a particular project for consummation, site proposals are solicited through the local press and other advertising media. Site investigations are then conducted by representatives of the Public Buildings Administration or the Post Office Department and a comprehensive report covering the investigation is submitted to the Joint Committee on Public Buildings, comprised of the Commissioner of Public Buildings and the Fourth Assistant

Postmaster General, who act for the Federal Works Administrator and the Postmaster General in the selection of Federal building sites. Following the acquisition of a site, the various agencies for whom facilities are to be provided are required to submit their space needs and indicate by room and area the number of employees to be located in each room, and the purpose for which the space will be used. These requests are analyzed and reviewed, following which space directives are prepared for use by the Office of Design and Construction in the actual design of the proposed building. With respect to the construction of public buildings within the metropolitan area of the District of Columbia, specific legislative authority and appropriations are required.

Under Executive Order 6166, previously mentioned, the Secretary of the Interior, with the approval of the President, promulgated certain regulations concerning the approval of leases to be entered into by other agencies and the transfer of appropriated lease funds to the Director of the National Park Service. Originally, only a small part of the funds required for the leasing of space in the District of Columbia was appropriated to the National Park Service. Gradually, however, the Bureau of the Budget deleted such funds and authority to use the same from the appropriations of the various departments and agencies. Thus at the present time funds for the rental of space for the housing of Government activities in the District of Columbia, except Government corporations, are appropriated directly to the Public Buildings Administration.

While the Public Buildings Administration has complete authority to lease space outside of the District of Columbia for the housing of Government activities, such authority is not exclusive with the result that the majority of the Government agencies make their own leases for space outside the District of Columbia.

In connection with its function of procuring space by lease in and outside of the District of Columbia, this Office maintains a leasing unit in Washington with branches in various strategic cities throughout the country, in which are maintained records of all Government rented space, the units thereof, space available for rental and the most economic rate therefor.

Many agencies having rental funds available seek the services of this established leasing office to assist them in the making of their leases. In a number of instances where other agencies have requested such services of this Office, Government-owned space is recommended and in other instances less costly privately owned space is suggested.

Pursuant to the President's directive of April 3, 1946, strenuous efforts have been made to return leased space to the owners. A number of agencies have been moved from high-priced rented space either to Government-owned space or to buildings where a lower rental was available.

One of the important and continuing functions of this Office is the control and disposition of Government-owned real property declared to it by other agencies as in excess of their needs. Under the acts relating to this function the Commissioner of Public Buildings is authorized to assign space in such properties to other Federal agencies, or, pending a sale, to lease such real property, or to sell the same at public sale upon such terms and after such public advertisement as he may deem to be in the public interest.

OFFICE OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

This Office, comprising two principal units, the Office of the Supervising Architect and the Office of the Supervising Engineer, is responsible for:

(a) The complete design and construction of all Federal buildings authorized to the Public Buildings Administration for construction, extension or remodeling. This work embraces post offices, courthouses, customhouses, appraiser's stores, mints, immigration stations, Federal office buildings, and marine hospitals and laboratories, etc.

(b) The repair and preservation of all Federal buildings throughout the United States and its possessions (totaling approximately 5,000 buildings) except Army and Navy establishments, veterans' hospitals, etc., and Federal buildings in the District of Columbia.

(c) For the design and/or construction of buildings authorized to other Government agencies at their request. Such work involving services only is rendered on a reimbursable basis, under the Economy Act; and when construction contracts are awarded by Public Buildings Administration funds are transferred under the provisions of the act of June 25, 1910 as amended.

This Office, in collaboration with the Office of Real Estate Management, develops the character, site requirements, space and building needs and estimates the probable cost of individual projects or construction programs for submission

to the Congress (through the Bureau of the Budget) for authorizations and appropriations. This work requires conferences with other agencies and a detailed knowledge of their needs.

Following authorization of a project and the acquisition of the site, this Office is responsible for the development of design sketches, cost estimates, working drawings and specifications, the taking of bids, award of construction contracts, and the supervision of construction and administration of the construction contract through final settlement. Similar action is taken in the handling of the annual repair program.

While the repair program, outside of the District of Columbia, is handled largely in the division offices of the Public Buildings Administration the construction program requires a force of well-trained technicians and specialists located in Washington.

The Office of the Supervising Architect comprises five technical divisions: Design, Architectural, Architectural Engineering, Structural and Mechanical Engineering; and the Office of the Supervising Engineer comprises a Construction Division and a Repair Division. Certain functions of the Office are handled in the ten division offices strategically located throughout the United States.

Office of Buildings Management

This Office operates both within and outside of the District of Columbia. Services furnished by it within the metropolitan area of the District of Columbia include management, maintenance, operation, protection, repair, and improvement of Government-owned buildings and the management and operation of leased buildings. In buildings outside of the metropolitan area of the District the Office is responsible only for operation, maintenance, and protection. Repair, preservation, and the equipping of these buildings are under the supervision of the Supervising Engineer. This Office is one of the largest organizations engaged in the field of public-buildings management. There are 364 Government-owned and rented buildings under its jurisdiction, located in the metropolitan area of the District of Columbia, involving a gross floor area of approximately 45,000,000 square feet. Outside of the District of Columbia this Office maintains and protects 439 Government-owned and rented buildings containing a gross floor area of approximately 20,000,000 square feet. Within the District of Columbia it has no jurisdiction over the Executive Mansion, the Capitol Buildings including the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court of the United States, the buildings under the jurisdiction of the regents of the Smithsonian Institution, the Treasury Building, and the City Post Office.

The personnel of this Office, other than administrative, consists mainly of char force for the cleaning of buildings; mechanics such as plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc., for the maintenance of the buildings and to effect repairs thereof; engineers and other skilled employees to insure the continued operation of highly technical equipment such as electric, steam, plumbing, and heating systems, air conditioning, elevators, etc.; guards for the protection of the public property; and laborers. A number of these employees, such as operating engineers, work different shifts in order to furnish continuous services on a 24-hour basis.

The functions of this Office involve the operation of buildings, the making of tenant changes, and adjustments for the occupants, including supplying furniture and the making of all minor repairs and improvements. With its maintenance and operating force all phases of operating and housekeeping are performed, including all maintenance and repairs that can be accomplished by force account. Tenant changes required as the result of changes in the assignment of space, internal shifts in the office units and alterations and changes for the comfort and convenience of occupants, are carried out by this Office, and there is performed in its shops, in addition, furniture repairs, manufacture and renovation of exhibits, crating, and manufacture of special needs of the occupants which may more conveniently be done in this manner than by contract or purchase.

This Office is required to maintain a protection unit for the buildings under its jurisdiction, since the Federal Government cannot insure its property and since many of the buildings are located in exclusive jurisdictional areas outside of the control of the State or its political subdivisions. This protection unit guards the buildings, their contents and occupants, against fire damages and injuries as well as against theft and vandalism.

In many instances, other agencies having funds available for the purpose, in order to effect economies, request this Office to maintain and operate and protect, on a reimbursable basis, buildings which are under the jurisdiction of those respective agencies.

A communications system, used by more than 50 agencies, is maintained by this Office. The facilities of this system at the end of the fiscal year 1946 included 36 cities serviced by private-line message service, and 28 cities serviced by broadcast system.

In connection with tenant changes in shifting of occupants within the various buildings in the District of Columbia this Office maintains a moving section for the transfer of equipment within buildings and from one building to another.

With respect to the management of public buildings, this Office surveys the structures periodically by expert engineers in various specialized fields as a means for listing and planning for needed repairs, renovations, and improvements. The advance planning of repairs and improvements requires the determination of priority of projects, taking into consideration the comparative needs of the Government agencies, the maximum budget consideration during each fiscal period and, further, as a part of the consummation of the repairs and improvements, the shifting of the occupants and the handling of work, whether by force account or contract, is carried on by this Office in such a manner as to cause as little inconvenience to the occupants as possible.

Mr. REYNOLDS. Briefly, the Public Buildings Administration is the agency of Government that constructs and keeps in repair those buildings that are occupied by the executive branch in Washington and in the field. We call "the field" outside of Washington. It includes generally the categories of post offices, courthouses, appraisers' stores, mints, customhouses, and buildings of that character. We do not build on Army or Navy reservations, and we do not build for the Veterans' Administration. We operate all of the buildings in Washington of the Executive branch, with the exception of the Treasury Building, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the Government Printing Office—special buildings of that character.

The buildings of the Capitol—that is, the legislative branch—are under the direction of the Architect of the Capitol.

Outside of the District of Columbia post-office buildings are operated by the Post Office Department, Treasury buildings or special-service buildings such as Public Health Service hospitals, and buildings of that character, are operated by the using agency.

We are charged with the responsibility for the repair of all of those buildings regardless of whether we operate them or not.

In the field of leasing we have almost complete control in the District of Columbia, except the corporations. Outside of Washington we lease some 20,000,000 square feet. Each department and agency—or most of them, rather—have legislative authority to do leasing themselves. For instance, the Bureau of Internal Revenue leases a lot of their space. The Post Office Department quite properly leases their post offices in the small communities and the substations in the larger cities. Agriculture, incidentally, has a large leasing program throughout the United States.

We have certain controls of leasing in that a lease must be cleared with us before it is entered into for the purpose only of determining whether there is Federal space available. Outside of that, we have no authority as to the fair value of the lease or anything of that nature.

We also have authority to go into buildings that are leased and operated by other agencies to determine whether the space is properly used or not. That is a very recent authority of the Congress.

I think generally, Mr. Chairman, that gives our basic responsibilities. It is fully outlined in the summary and then for a student of the problem there is the longer statement we have made, which gives citations from the law, et cetera.